

Friends of the Mississippi River

360 North Robert • Suite 400 • Saint Paul, MN 55101 • 651/ 222-2193 • www.fmr.org

Working to protect the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area

September 21, 2012

Lucy Thompson
25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms Thompson,

I am writing today to share our general support, and specific suggestions, for the Great River Passage Master Plan. In the roughly 130 years since Horace Cleveland began systematic protections of St. Paul's riverfront, no plan has proposed such a comprehensive and detailed agenda for St. Paul's spectacular and beloved riverfront.

We have been encouraged to provide comments once more for consideration by the Planning Commission. Many of our comments here are excerpted from our previous submissions to St. Paul Parks and Recreation staff. We have organized our comments geographically, starting at the northern end of St. Paul's corridor, and moving downriver.

Restoration of Hidden Falls Creek

The current draft plan contains some excellent ideas for restoration of Hidden Falls and the creek below the falls. It does not, however, yet contain any language relating to the restoration of Hidden Falls Creek on top of the bluff. We hope that language can be included that encourages the exploration of day-lighting Hidden Falls Creek on top of the bluff as part of the Ford Motor Company redevelopment. A restored stream channel could extend into the new development providing stormwater treatment and a green connection to the river.

More bluff-top open space at Ford Motor Company

We believe there is a great opportunity to expand bluff-top open space as part of the Ford Motor Company redevelopment. We hope the plan can be amended to include this idea. Hidden Falls Regional Park could be further expanded to include more bluff-top open space by exploring the acquisition of a portion of the Ford site east of Mississippi River Boulevard between Ford Parkway and the scenic overlook. By realigning Mississippi River Boulevard further from the bluff the City could create more park space for separated pedestrian and bike paths, picnic tables and benches. This would be a tremendous added amenity for the new residents of the redeveloped Ford site.

Watergate Marina

At Watergate Marina we are supportive of the plan's direction toward improving and expanding access. New amenities such as a café, canoe and kayak access and storage, outdoor rentals for bicycling, skiing and boating equipment, and pedestrian access for day use of adjacent park areas would all be welcome additions at Watergate. We very much like the idea of improving the

upstream lagoon for use by non-motorized boaters. But, we are concerned that the plan does not currently contain language that speaks to the limits of new development at the site. We remain supportive of improvements but would request additional plan language such as: *"The redeveloped marina and associated structures and facilities will be sensitively designed and scaled to minimize intrusion on the natural characteristics of the park and the river. Scenic views to and from the river will be protected and new buildings and facilities, including parking, will not exceed the footprint size of the existing buildings, facilities, and parking areas."*

Shepard Road

We are very pleased with the proposed redesign of Shepard Road. The redesign of crossings is vital to integrating the Park into south Highland Park. And we are particularly pleased to see the plan call for the lowering of speed limits on Shepard Road to 35 mph throughout the length of the road. This is a desperately needed change in order to successfully integrate the Great River Passage with the life of the neighborhoods around it.

At the same time, as we seek to make our neighborhoods "more connected" to the river corridor, we were disappointed to see a new connection that at one time had been contemplated between south Highland Park and the center of Crosby Farm Park dropped from later drafts of the plan. South Highland Park is easily one of the two most diverse neighborhoods adjacent to the Great River Passage, and is among the densest neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the entrances to the park depicted in the plan are currently 1.6 miles apart. Many people in the area do not own cars, and so expecting them to walk this distance to get to the riverfront seems at odds with the goal of being "more connected." Figuring out how to both protect the sensitive bluff ecosystem and get pedestrians up and down the bluff will require thoughtful planning, and not all funding sources support stairs without ADA accessibility, but we think the plan should call for an additional stairway in this area.

Island Station

We like the location of adventure sports at Island Station. Thinking of this site as a hub for the National Park Service and other outdoors-related organizations makes good sense to us. The ecosystem around this site is already substantially impacted, and the bay behind the peninsula creates a sheltered access point for boating facilities.

With these improvements in mind, we are surprised at the minimal attention given in the plan to the connection between Island Station and the commercial hub and renovated brewery around West Seventh Street and Randolph Avenue. The Randolph Avenue corridor seems likely in the long run to hold great promise, and yet today doesn't even have sidewalks, let alone complimentary development worthy of such a significant connection. Other parts of the plan address private redevelopment when it supports the goals of the larger effort, and we think it was an important oversight that this area was not given somewhat more emphasis in the plans and diagrams as well.

West Side Esplanade

At the Esplanade Site on the West Side (between Robert Street and the Lafayette Freeway) we continue to be concerned about the relationship of the riverfront's public spaces and private spaces. The plan depicts private development fairly close to the river's edge. In order for the riverfront to continue to read as a fundamentally public space, we must be very careful in our treatment of this area.

The plans remain silent on the exact setbacks from the riverfront, a change we have supported in the past. Still, we think the current illustrated plan places the buildings closer than we would like to the promenade.

We would be more comfortable with the reduced setbacks if we could be certain the river-adjacent uses would be publicly-oriented and complimentary to the river – such uses might include a public plaza, retail, or restaurants, including outside dining. We would encourage the plan to we suggest that the City retain ownership of these first-floor commercial spaces as a commercial condo in the larger development, much as the City retains ownership of the Wabasha frontage of Lawson Commons, to maintain control and ensure these key spaces are put to a public use that takes appropriate advantage of the riverfront location.

As one important way of mitigating this impact, we previously embraced the idea of “green fingers” reaching from the riverfront deeper into the area. However, the scale of these “green fingers” is critical to their success. They are represented in two different, and possibly contradictory, ways in the plan. In the diagram on page 150 they appear to be substantive parks, nearly a block in width, that reach into the site from the riverfront. But other diagrams, notably the two on page 152 and 153, these parks could be construed to depict the green connections as simply a wide boulevard running down the middle of street connections. We understand the intent in all three is to promote a park space that is more substantive than simply a wide median with trees, but revisions to the diagrams, or new text would help better clarify the intent as we refer back to this document in the future.

We wholeheartedly embrace the proposal to undertake a small area plan for this area in the spirit of the existing West Side Flats Master Plan.

Pigs Eye Regional Park

We like many of the larger-scale changes on the east side. Plans to provide access to the Pig's Eye Regional Park area are welcome. We have appreciated planners' work wrestling with the best way to get access to the site and create a trailhead in the area. The plans to insert a continuous trail into the Highwood Hills area enhances the weakest portion of St. Paul's segment of the Mississippi River Trail.

Fish Creek

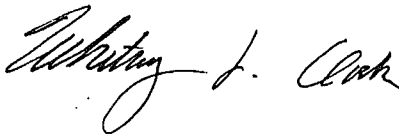
In tandem with this new trail, we would urge more focus on enhancing the City's connection to the Fish Creek area in the City's far southeastern corner. Between Point Douglas Road and the City limits, there is just under 1/3 mile of trail along Fish Creek. This is one of the hidden gems of the St. Paul Park System, where this scenic creek gurgles in a small limestone gorge. Just beyond the City's border, Maplewood is in the process of completing the purchase of a large tract of former farmland adjacent to Fish Creek with views to the river. Maplewood intends to develop the area into a larger park, and hiking trail corridor. St. Paul's portion of the existing hiking trail has some ongoing maintenance and management needs, including shoring up several smaller WPA-era in-stream structures. We also encourage the plan to include a better-marked trailhead to guide visitors to the area.

We were disappointed that detailed maps did not provide any special acknowledgement of the area, nor propose an improvement to the Fish Creek area, even though some trailhead improvements clearly seem both warranted and desirable to accentuate this unique and very under-appreciated amenity.

The sometimes-passionate debates taking place in neighborhoods up and down the City's riverfront these last many months are testament to the deep and meaningful connection people have with their parks and their riverfront. These connections have been cultivated over generations, as the City has gradually reoriented itself to embrace the Mississippi as one of its greatest assets. Though there remain some details to work through, we're confident the City of St. Paul is well on its way to advancing a plan deserving of the rich history, diversity, beauty and ecology found throughout St. Paul's riverfront.

We are pleased to have been given the opportunity to play a constructive role in this dialogue, and would always be happy to talk more about our comments, or answer any questions. You may call me or River Planner Bob Spaulding at 651-222-2193 anytime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Whitney L. Clark". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Whitney L. Clark
Executive Director

Thompson, Lucy (CI-StPaul)

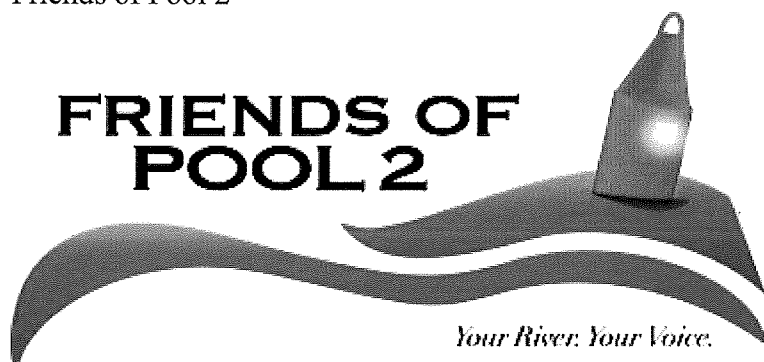
From: Greg Genz <gj92@att.net>
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2012 4:27 PM
To: Thompson, Lucy (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Great River Passage

Ms. Thompson,

The Friends of Pool 2 appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Great River Passage Plan. We find most of the far-reaching plan attractive for the citizens and the flora and fauna of the City and support the general concepts of the Plan. We feel that there are members of the River Community, who need to have a voice in the future of this Plan. Recreational power boaters offer the opportunity to positively impact the economic health of the Riverfront. All boaters will need a better access to the downtown side of the River and we don't feel that has been properly addressed. It is not feasible to use Lamberts Landing, as that has commercial traffic having priority and it would be unsafe for small boats to moor in a zone without No Wake provisions. Putting a marina in the "Union Oil" slip or High Bridge area will not prove to be sustainable in the long run. The City and or Parks can't keep the existing marina usable due to silting issues and having another off-channel marina will add to the non-existent dredging budget. Using smart planning to put new amenities in to the existing St. Paul Yacht Club facilities will prove to be more sustainable for boaters needs.

Thank You,

Greg Genz
Friends of Pool 2



9-20-12

To: City of St. Paul Planning Commission

From: Kent Petterson, GRPMP Advisory Committee
Board of Directors, W. 7th Business Association
Co Chair W. 7th Enhancement Coalition

Re: Comments regarding the proposed 95 pages of addition to the City Comprehensive Plan

Dear Commissioners

Thank you for the opportunity to present the following comments. These comments are my comments solely. They are distilled from discussions with other informed individuals. It is interesting to note that the entire Parks chapter of the Comprehensive Plan for the city is only half as long as these added 95 pages being proposed for what is essentially a large area plan. This indicated to me that much of the material in the GRPMP proposed additions contained information that maybe shouldn't be in a comprehensive plan. I have been guided by information provided in the following two paragraphs provided by Lucy Thompson.

The core chapters of the Comprehensive Plan (Parks and Recreation, Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Historic Preservation and Water Resources Management) state the City's overarching vision in these areas, and are used to guide the vision, goals and objectives of subsequent (and more detailed) area plans, district plans, etc. The level of policy/vision is quite broad at the level of these core chapters, and then the more detailed plans "interpret" the policy/vision for a particular sub-area of the city. That is why the primary function of the Planning Commission regarding the Great River Passage is to determine whether the broad vision, goals and objectives (as excerpted from the large document) are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan does not contain specific projects and budgets, nor does it contain specific direction on the organization of City departments to achieve specific implementation strategies. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on the built environment, the arrangement of the city's component parts - land, streets and buildings - and the infrastructure that supports them.

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Regarding your comments for the Planning Commission. As you know, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on September 21, 2012. You can present your comments at the hearing, or you can submit them to me in writing anytime before September 21. Please note, though, that staff will not respond to those comments until after the hearing, and our comments will be vetted with and back through the Commission. Please also note that we are not looking for comments on typos, grammar, etc. We want people to comment on whether they believe the vision, goals and objectives in the Great River Passage Comprehensive Plan Amendment are consistent with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission's comments (and any proposed changes) are then forwarded to the City Council for final adoption.

1 – The process leading up to public comment before the Planning Commission was poorly understood and could result in defective responses. People do not understand there are essentially two GRP plans with different pagination up for approval. Only one is appropriate for comment before the Planning Commission. A late Sept. 11 posting on the website was not announced to email subscribers and was too late to gain general understanding of what comment is appropriate before the planning commission.

2 – One of the goals of the GRPMP is to connect existing and new bike paths to the river. The District 9 area plan calls for completion of the 35E bike/ped bridge that ends at United Hospital on the south and along Walnut to the river. This plan addition creates a conflict between the local area plan and the comprehensive plan. It would be improper for the map to be included as is in the GRPMP without a resolution. Parenthetically, a second bridge also across 35E and about 5 blocks south of Randolph with a bike path along the west side of 35E down to Race is not completed to the river either. I would think these omissions would be in conflict with PR 6 point 1.2 of the comprehensive plan and should be completed to the river before the map is included in the GRPMP.

3 – P.48 and P.51 The specific objective to provide active nature based recreation at Hidden Falls has not been agreed upon locally and is a specific program use that is not appropriate for a comprehensive plan prior to a future area plan.

4 – P.49 Ditto For specifics at Shadow Falls Creek area

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5 – P.56 is an intersection construction detail. It hardly seems wise to include this type of information in a comprehensive plan. This information is appropriate for the GRPMP but not the Comprehensive Plan. All specifics of this type should be removed.

6 – P.57 and 58 also are roadway details. Ditto #5

7 – P.65 has specific details of interpreting Victoria Landing that is part of an ongoing Advisory that has not been completed. This should be deleted from the comp. plan.

8 – P.65 has a section headed Create a River Balcony. Would it be more appropriate to say something like, 'We envision' a River Balcony? Action oriented specific language is used over and over in the 95 pages proposed for addition to the comp. plan. If one were to check the current St. Paul Comprehensive Plan it is filled with words like encourage, demonstrate, promote, strategy, improve, explore, seek, pursue, emphasize. These non-specific type of words can stand the test of time for a long term planning document. The language used in these pages is too often determining and specific and destined to create future conflict in the areas affected by these specifics being codified in the comprehensive plan.

9 – P.60 & 61 the controversy over specific use/programming at Watergate Marina indicate it is a mistake to include this in the comprehensive plan. These specifics should be left for a later area plan.

10 – P.95 is a summary of the essence of Chapter 7. Those that have been closely following this and the planning commission were told that only the first six chapters were to be considered for adoption into the comprehensive plan.

11 – Maybe I missed it, but this large area plan for the river pays very little attention to the requirements of PR8 Safe and Secure Access to and Use of Parks and Trails and specifically any application of CPTED and other strategies.

12 – Comp Plan PR10 paragraph 1.20 PR 26 paragraphs 5.9 and 5.10 call for shared use and resource seeking elsewhere before duplicating in the park system. The proposal of an expensive and vulnerable in the flood plain Environmental Learning Center is entirely inappropriate to be suggested in new pages P.61 and P.62 and contrary to the intent of the existing comp. plan to not duplicate services.

13 – The focus and emphasis on the important goal of helping people to discover the river via their bike or walking has resulted in large segments of the population being poorly served in the plan. In particular the needs of the young, the elderly, the handicapped, visitors from a distance, and tourists are not adequately addressed. Strong language of intent to support and implement coordinated future planning for parking and transit as needed for these population segments must be included in the GRPMP. These plan pages

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should describe in more detail what is needed to fulfill the aspirations expressed in the comprehensive plan PR6 paragraph 1.1 to ensure convenient and equitable access.

14 – P.5 “The GRPPMP will be the **starting point** for further planning of the areas within the corridor and a mechanism for managing and funding its recommendations. Concepts in this plan will be further refined and developed, with additional community involvement, as funding becomes available.” This is extracted from the last paragraph of the page and explains the intent that the specifics proposed in the master plan are a ‘starting point’ as given and approved in the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission must take a serious look at every paragraph and sentence of the proposed language because many of the specifics that have not been understood or approved locally and which are not appropriate for a comprehensive plan will be the source of constant conflict when the appropriate area plan takes these proposals up for community approval in the future.

9-22-12

To City Of St. Paul Planning Commission

Re: Area Plans – Large and small in St. Paul and the Great River Passage Master Plan

The comments on Friday Sept 21 to the planning commission highlighted a particular problem with the Great River Passage Master Plan (GRPMP). It is this. There is a widespread impression that the language proposed for inclusion in the comprehensive plan and adoption by the city is not clear with regard to the status of (small) area plans with respect to this larger area GRPMP when specific implementation is considered.

Good friends of the river and the plan see problems ahead for the city if this is not resolved properly at the planning commission and at the city council. As I understand it, we have a number of plan areas in the city currently and going forward. I asked the question of the planning commission chair whether small area plans were germane for the discussion and was assured they were. I am not sure that district councils across the city understand that their existing area plans are germane and will be affected or how they might be affected by this larger area plan at the river. The effect might be less in some cases, but for those plans along the river it could be quite significant.

District 9 is just finishing an update of their area plan but it was not taken up in an effort to discover how the GRPMP might impact their existing language. That would not have been appropriate since any discussions would be speculative until such time as a GRPMP is adopted.

The following types of area plans are in play in this GRPMP process. Some are existing, some are in process, and some are future.

1- Existing District Council Area Plans, especially those along the river may not been examined carefully at the District Council level. In the case of District 9, although I am not speaking for them, my impression of their response is if I might paraphrase; get back to us when you have a plan. I hope that the Planning Commission is now taking up small area plan comparison.

2- Ford property was deliberately not included in the GRPMP

3- Specific recommendations for Victoria Park (VP) were removed from GRPMP because specific proposed details, which were predetermining of park use, had not been agreed upon by the local neighborhood. It was agreed the VP advisory should make use recommendations for Parks before specifics were given in the GRPMP.

4- Seven significant gathering places have been identified along the river. Five were in the first draft of GRPMP and two were added without public discussion in the new July version. The fact that two were added after the often-mentioned significant citizen participation highlights that the process was not perfect and that omissions occurred. These types of specifics are fungible in the future. Including them in the Comprehensive Plan creates problems.

Whether it is seven gathering places, more or less, each probably should have a small area plan in the future to determine implementation when funds are available. This

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Implementation could be one year or ten or thirty years in the future. The idea that folks in 2011 and 2012 have this pegged is foolish. New eyes and conditions bring a fresh perspective that should not be imposed on the future. Isn't that why specifics are avoided in comp plans?

I would like to address the notion of widespread consensus across the city in favor of everything in the plan. It was a strong effort to be inclusive and respectful of opinion with many meetings and in some cases large attendance. I believe I was at all of the public meetings and observed at some that weren't public. It was inspiring to see the support for the aspirations of GRP. There were a lot of people that participated in developing what they understood was a vision of the future relationship of St. Paul to the river. The plan was sold as a vision and it should be clear that the plan is a framework and a vision and not specific for implementation.

If one were to examine the attendance records of the GRP Advisory, you would see that half of the members didn't attend a single public advisory meeting. Of those that attended a meeting another half attended only one, which leaves around 12-15 people that attended more than one public advisory meeting. A significant portion of those 12-15 came before you on Sept 21 to say, not so fast. In addition, inland district council participation was low as was that of the elderly and minorities. An assertion of consensus or strong backing is true only for a narrow range of vision in the GRPMP.

In the May 2012 ten page memo from city staff to the Parks Commission, it was reaffirmed that the plan was vision, but new language was added that the GRPMP has specifics that staff intends on using for guidance and implementation.

This statement is further reinforced by the last paragraph of Page 5 of the Comp plan additions that indicate that the GRPMP is considered a starting point. Meaning that the specifics that are included are agreed upon when approved by the city council and those things will be implemented.

The language on Page 95 of the Comp plan additions is a summary of Chapter 7. This language is another example of the view staff had that what we have before us today is right for tomorrow too. It is a mistake to wrap approval around more than the broad theses. The inclusion of specifics in this visionary plan seeks to skip a step of approval before those discussions have occurred.

How to resolve this? I would respectfully suggest a few ideas.

A) Language should be inserted in the GRPMP that is clear and unambiguous that all area plans have equal status with this larger plan and that the larger GRP area plan lacking agreement about specifics when found contradictory do not supercede but are equal to existing local area plans thereby not requiring the smaller to align with the larger without agreement.

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B) That the implementation specifics mentioned in the May Memo to the Parks Commission be highlighted as such in the plan and that everything else be labeled clearly as vision. In one case, the bike ped bridge to the lower landing Bruce Vento area is headed without the word vision. The language of the GRPMP is not clear as to when vision stops and implementation specifics begin. We were seduced by vision, and now it is not clear where the reality begins.

C) Or as an alternative to A and B, the new form of the GRPMP can be sent back to District councils with notice of the status of their area plans. Comment should be requested as to agreement before conflicting specifics are included in the GRPMP.

There is a danger that staff might miss understand the approval represented by the GRPMP and proceed to soliciting funds without the agreement it should have to move forward with implementation. I believe these suggestions would go a long way to ensuring the long-term success of the GRPMP and reduce significant conflicts between neighborhoods and Park & Recreation as it seeks to implement a great vision for St. Paul.

Thank you, Kent Petterson
503 St. Clair Ave.
GRPMP Advisory

Speaker # 7

Testimony to the St. Paul Planning Commission
Regarding the Proposed Amendment to the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan
To Incorporate Great River Passage Master Plan

Friday, September 21, 2012

By

Dan McGuiness
2160 Ogden Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119

My name is Dan McGuiness and, while I am on the boards of directors of the Lower Phalen Creek Project and the St. Paul Riverfront Corporation, these comments are mine alone and do not necessarily represent those or any other organizations.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak and to strongly urge you to adopt the document before you; the proposed amendment to the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan. The Great River Passage Master Plan, and this amendment from which it is derived, has so much to like about it.

The current version of the Master Plan is a result of a long and deliberative process that, thanks to the active engagement of community groups, district councils, individuals and agencies, is much improved from the original draft.

As a person who has spent my career working along this river, from its headwaters to the Gulf, it is great to see the community embrace the river and recognize that we have here a resource of international significance – right here in our front yard. It is truly a river where we work and where we play; where we do business and where we find physical, spiritual and emotional renewal.

As a resident of St. Paul who makes the east side my home, I am particularly pleased to see the prominence that the City gives in this plan to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and its growing potential as one of the great gathering places along the river – just a short walk from both Dayton's Bluff and Lowertown and the proposed new stadium, and, with continued efforts, with a connection someday to the Sam Morgan Trail and the Mississippi River.

The Plan also lays out, at long-last, a vision for two other long-overlooked landscapes along the river; the Highwood Bluffs and Pig's Eye Lake. At one time I feared that planning consultants and the City staff were going to run out of time, energy and ideas as they worked their way downstream. But what has evolved in this process is truly an exciting vision and set of goals to achieve this vision in every reach of the river.

We are Minnesota's capital city and we are also a city of neighborhoods and this plan, like the river, runs through and along many of them. There are some aspects of the plan that do not have the support of the district councils, community groups and people who live nearby.

The current plans for the area around Watergate Marina and Crosby Farm and the plans for the Lilydale area are two examples of note. I hope that the City and the affected communities can find ways to resolve these differences and I will conclude by offering some proposed guidelines.

If you have been on the river you know that there are a series of navigation markers and lights to help guide river pilots as they travel on the river. The navigation aids help the pilots determine, among all the possibilities, when to aim straight ahead, when to turn, to keep from going aground. As we navigate toward adoption and implementation of this plan here are three guidelines to consider:

1. **Don't forget the river's point of view.** Remember that it is not just about what you see from the land looking toward the river, but what you see from the river as well. And remember, in the midst of all these plans for capital improvements along the shore, that the greatest capital improvement was already here long before us – the river itself. If this river did not exist as the central feature of this plan, we would have to budget for it and build it. So let us be grateful for what already exists.
2. **Take care of what we have and keep the health of the river in mind.** In all our plans and projects, let's remember that clean water and healthy and diverse habitat along this river is the very foundation for all else. When in doubt about what to build or what to do, err on the side of what is pleasant and simple, the re-use of existing buildings and improvements where possible, and remember that much of what we call the Great River Passage is also in the great river floodplain.
3. **Remember that this city's strength is derived from the interwoven fabric of people, neighborhoods, district councils, elected and appointed public officials and professional staff.** We all need to be committed to taking care of this place we love – the great City of St. Paul and the Great River Passage that is its central feature. Realization of the Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing endeavor – a community endeavor to which we all continue to be committed.



Wilderness Inquiry

September 20, 2012

Mr. Michael Hahm
Director, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
25 4th St W, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mr. Hahm,

Wilderness Inquiry is an enthusiastic partner with the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department in our Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures (UWCA) program. UWCA provides outdoor education and recreation opportunities on the Mississippi River, complete with canoe trips, overnight camping and environmental education programs for schools, youth and families.

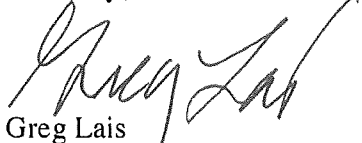
The Great River Passage project will revitalize the 17-mile riverfront corridor in Saint Paul to benefit our environment, bolster our tourist economy and improve our overall quality of life by expanding opportunities for recreation and open space. This project enhances the prominence of the Mississippi River as a regional and national natural, scenic and cultural resource. We are proud to support this unique opportunity to revive Saint Paul, MN as Rivertown, USA.

This project shares our goal of encouraging outdoor recreation and fostering environmental stewardship by connecting people to their local waterway. Our vision for UWCA is to help thousands of Saint Paul residents and visitors experience their backyard wilderness in a safe, intimate and eco-friendly way. WI will work with the City to identify recreational needs and further, to developing canoe landings and operational facilities at various locations within the corridor including Hidden Falls, Fort Snelling, Watergate and Harriet Island Parks.

We believe that this innovative project will aid our efforts and we are committed to working with the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department for the benefit of park users to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Greg Lais
Executive Director

September 21, 2012

Planning Commission
City of Saint Paul

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The Mississippi River runs for five miles within Highland Park and defines more than 50 percent of the neighborhood boundary. The Gorge, Hidden Falls, Cosby Farm, Watergate Marina and Shepard Road areas are predominant features of the Highland Park neighborhood. The Great River Passage Master Plan has the potential for tremendous impact on our neighborhood and the Highland District Council has devoted more time and energy to this issue than any other in recent memory.

The Highland District Council has made it a priority to be involved in the GRP Plan. The HDC provided representatives on the GRP Community Task Force, reviewed and discussed iterations of the GRP Plan, and hosted discussions with Friends of the Parks and Friends of the Mississippi. While the Highland District Council is supportive of the GRP Plan's intent to create a long-term vision for Saint Paul's river area parklands, the final plan and process has raised several concerns:

- The length and complexity of the GRP Plan and Comprehensive Plan make it nearly impossible for neighborhood citizens and board members to thoroughly understand and formulate feedback on the GRP's fit with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Although the GRP Plan development process appears to be thorough, there is significant reaction at the neighborhood level that the process was not very inclusive or reflective of citizen input.
- It is unclear from the GRP Plan document whether there will be a formal community notification and hearing process followed before individual Great River Passage projects are implemented or whether updates to the Comprehensive Plan and adoption of the GRP Plan constitutes blanket support and approval for all elements of the GRP Plan.
 - For example, certain specific projects within the plan, such as the addition of on-street bike lanes, significant changes to vehicular thoroughfares, or major capital investments in flood areas or the Ford site, need more extensive vetting. In the past these types of changes have included District Council action or updates to Small Areas Plans.
- There is significant concern with the Plan's *Chapter 7 – Delivering the Vision*, which advocates for increased annual expense, expansion of the Parks department structure, creation of new authorities, and prioritization of fund-seeking for new Great River Passage projects. The

potential impact on an already-strained City budget, along with a finite tax base, raises questions regarding the fiscal soundness of implementing the Plan at this time.

Overall, the Great River Passage Master Plan is an important initiative and contains many features that the Highland District Council fully supports. The District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan adopted in 2007, includes Parks and Recreation and Environmental goals of "protecting existing natural resources and park amenities" and "preserving and enhancing environmental amenities in the District." Furthermore, the GRP Master Plan section on Shepard Road is consistent with the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan, adopted in 1999.

The Highland District Council has held multiple meetings and adopted several resolutions regarding the Plan which are attached. These resolutions do not reflect final positions of the Highland District Council and our organization will continue to review and provide additional feedback throughout the Great River Passage Master Plan adoption process as well as the planning and implementation of GRP projects.

Sincerely,

Kathy Carruth
Executive Director
Highland District Council

Tia Anderson
President
Highland District Council



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

Resolution Regarding the Great River Passage Master Plan

Whereas, having accessible, well maintained parks are an important asset to our community in that they increase property values, provide recreation space for residents, aid in storm water treatment and air quality, and improve the overall quality of life in our neighborhood and the City of Saint Paul; and

Whereas, the City of Saint Paul initiated a project in 2010 to develop a long term Master Plan for the Great River Passage (GRP), the City's 17 miles of Mississippi River parklands, and created a Community Task Force to assist in the visioning process to become more natural, more urban, and more connected; and

Whereas, Highland Park has approximately five miles of riverfront within its district, including The Gorge, Hidden Falls Park, Shepard Road, and Crosby Farm Park; and

Whereas, a significant portion of the GRP parkland along the Mississippi River is within the floodplain and has flooded on a regular basis in recent history leaving river parkland inaccessible for significant periods of time; and

Whereas, the District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan adopted in 2007, includes Parks and Recreation and Environmental goals of "protecting existing natural resources and park amenities" and "preserving and enhancing environmental amenities in the District;" and

Whereas, representatives of the Highland District Council participated on the GRP Community Task Force; and

Whereas, the Highland District Council adopted a resolution on February 4, 2011, which was submitted to the Community Task Force supporting a focus on the natural setting of the GRP within Highland Park; and

Whereas, the City of Saint Paul released the sizable and detailed Great River Passage Master Plan to the public on January 11, 2012; and

Whereas, the Highland District Council hosted a community meeting on February 2, 2012, where Don Ganje, GRP project manager, presented an overview of the GRP Master Plan and fielded questions from residents and board members; and

Whereas, the GRP Master Plan was presented to the Highland District Council and community as a vision and aspiration rather than an action plan; and

Whereas, the public process for consideration and adoption of the GRP Master Plan has not been completed as of the date of this Resolution; and

Whereas, members of the HDC have expressed significant concern over the lack of neighborhood involvement in the specifics detailed in the GRP Master Plan; and

Whereas, the Highland District Council will continue to review the GRP Master Plan and recognizes the need for additional discussion regarding the Master Plan's potential impact on Highland Park as the HDC prepares to provide testimony for formal public hearings;

Be it resolved, that the Highland District Council requests that specific changes or additions to park land or park amenities contained in the Great River Passage proposal be subjected to a formal process of public notification and hearings, before application is made to either plan or fund a specific project (similar to a Small Area Plan whereby there is a process of local district council and community notification and review, followed by formal public hearings and City Council adoption); and

Be it further resolved, that the request for further public input into the plan details does not imply Highland District Council support or opposition of individual projects currently identified in the GRP Master Plan.

Adopted on September 6, 2012
By the Highland District Council



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

Resolution Recommending Removal of *Chapter 7- Implementation* from the GRP Master Plan

Whereas members of the Highland District Council are concerned about recent recreation center cut backs and a potential future squeeze on funds for existing facilities and programming of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation from new development within GRP; and

Whereas the GRP Master Plan is meant to be a 20 – 30 year plan and may therefore evolve over time, the Plan codifies significant new changes to the City of Saint Paul's Parks and Recreation Department's structure in *Chapter 7 – Implementation*; and

Whereas, the GRP Master Plan has significant budget implications for the City of Saint Paul immediately and for the future; and

Whereas the GRP Master Plan's description of funding sources are inadequate to assess budget impacts on existing Park programming and facilities and other departments in the City;

Be it resolved, that the Highland District Council recommends removal of *Chapter 7 – Implementation* of the Great River Passage final plan to be adopted by the Saint Paul City Council; and

Be it further resolved, that a new revised *Chapter 7 – Implementation Plan* be fully vetted in the City at such time as grant money and general fund money can be budgeted to pay for the GRP Master Plan's implementation.

Adopted on September 6, 2012
By the Highland District Council



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

Resolution Regarding the Gorge Regional Park within the Great River Passage Master Plan

Whereas, The Gorge Regional Park portion of the Great River Passage is recognized as a critical natural area with unique geological and historical significance and stretches south to Highway 5, beyond that depicted in the GRP Master Plan maps; and

Whereas, the GRP Master Plan's focus for The Gorge area is on preservation of sensitive areas and recreation outside sensitive ecological areas; and

Whereas, a formal delineation between natural areas and active areas within The Gorge including Hidden Falls Park may serve to protect the critical natural areas of the GRP; and

Whereas, the Highland District Council recognizes the long-standing agreement between Highland Park residents and the City to limit bicycle lanes along Mississippi River Boulevard;

Whereas, the Highland District Council will continue to review the GRP Master Plan and recognizes the need for additional discussion regarding the Master Plan's potential impact on Highland Park as the HDC prepares to provide testimony for formal public hearings;

Be it resolved, that the Highland District Council opposes any potential new on-street bicycle lanes on Mississippi River Boulevard; and

Be it further resolved, that the Highland District Council recommends the City make it a priority to seek funding to obtain portions of the Ford site bluff area, main Ford site, and downstream from the Ford dam for the Great River Passage.

Adopted on September 6, 2012
By the Highland District Council



Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

Resolution in Support of Shepard Road within the Great River Passage Master Plan

Whereas, the Great River Passage Master Plan calls for Shepard Road to become an extension of the historic vision of the Grand Round; and

Whereas, members of the Highland District Council acknowledge that Shepard Road needs changes to make it safer for bikers and pedestrians and improve access to the river yet continue to serve as a major vehicular thoroughfare connecting the airport and points south and west with downtown Saint Paul; and

Whereas, the GRP Master Plan section on Shepard Road is consistent with the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan, which was completed in 1999 following a rigorous local community process, but acknowledging that the Highland District Council has requested that the Saint Paul Planning Commission initiate a review and possible update of the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan; and

Whereas, members of the Highland District Council are concerned over the lack of project cost estimates and timeline identified in the GRP Master Plan for Shepard Road; and

Whereas, the Highland District Council recognizes the need for additional discussion regarding the GRP Master Plan's potential impact on Highland Park and will continue to review and work to influence implementation of project details;

Be it resolved that the Highland District Council supports the general intent of the Shepard Road section of the Great River Passage Master Plan.

Adopted on September 6, 2012
By the Highland District Council

Great River Passage Plan—Resolutions from September 6, 2012 HDC board meeting

A motion was made, seconded and adopted to submit HDC's February 27, 2012 Great River Passage Master Plan resolutions to the Planning Commission for consideration.

The HDC Community Services Committee Considered proposed the following resolution from which was amended and adopted:

Whereas there current exists a master plan for Crosby/Hidden Falls which has not been updated since 1978, and

Whereas that existing plan should be reviewed and revised through a public process which includes the Highland Park community before any specific plans concerning these areas are included in the GRP plan,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Highland District Council opposes inclusion of any specific project details in the GRP plan concerning the Crosby/Hidden Falls areas until the previous plan is reviewed, and

Be it further resolved that, in the event that the city chooses not to update the specific plans for Crosby/Hidden Falls parks, the HDC insists that the new buildings at Watergate marina will not exceed the foot print of the existing building, and that the parking not be expanded into natural areas.

The HDC Community Services Committee Considered proposed the following resolution from which was amended and adopted:

The Highland District Council requests that the following language be added to the section on the Watergate in the GRP Master Plan page 113/Comprehensive Plan version page 61:

- Redevelop the marina to maintain current uses and expand to include:
- Café or small restaurant
- Canoe and kayak access and storage
- Outdoor recreation sales, rentals and repairs for bicycling, skiing and boating
- Improved vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access for day use of adjacent park areas.

The redeveloped marina and associated structures and facilities will be sensitively designed and scaled to minimize intrusion on the natural characteristics of the park and the river. The new building will not exceed the footprint size of the existing building.

A motion was made, seconded and adopted to the following:

Whereas, District 15, (Highland Park) has the longest portion of riverfront of all of the neighborhoods in St. Paul, including, the Ford site, the Gorge, Hidden Falls Park, Shepard Road, and Crosby Farm Park, Watergate Marina, Crosby Lake and

Whereas, The Highland District Council has always been very involved in the planning and management of the riverfront and parks and properties bordering the river for the years, including, but not limited to planning, developing management plans, seeking grants for public improvements and partnering with the City of St. Paul on such projects as Two Rivers Overlook, The St. Paul Gateway Project, the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan, Crosby Management Plan, the Watergate Marina Plan, etc. and

Whereas, the City of Saint Paul initiated a project in 2010 to develop a long term Master Plan for the Great River Passage (GRP), and appointed a Task Force to oversee the planning process, and

Whereas city staff for the Task Force was asked on several occasions to hold public meetings within District 15, but no meetings were held in either District 15 nor in any location west of downtown, and

Whereas, residents of Highland Park and members of the HDC have expressed significant concern over the lack of neighborhood involvement in the specifics detailed in the GRP Master Plan for parks and property located within District 15, and

Whereas the development of the Ford site will have long-lasting impact on generations to come,

Whereas, the Plan had been presented to the public as a "vision" rather than an implementation plan with specific action items,

Be it resolved,

1. That the Highland District Council is publically expressing its concern over the lack of neighborhood involvement in District 15.
2. The Highland District Council requests specific changes or additions to park land or park amenities within District 15 be removed from the plan until such time as the City provides a formal process of public notification and hearings to be held with in the District 15, (similar to a Small Area Plan whereby there is a process of local district council and community notification and review, followed by formal public hearings and City Council adoption)

Adopted on September 6, 2012

By the Highland District Council



St. Paul and
Ramsey County

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Jennifer Read
Executive Director
and Secretary
Peggy Lynch

September 21, 2012

TO: St. Paul Planning Commission

FROM: Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County.
Peggy Lynch, Executive Director

TO: St. Paul Planning Commission

FROM: Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County.

The Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County are very pleased that the City of St. Paul has embarked on planning for the land use next to the Mississippi River. The River is the city's greatest natural resource and making the River our front yard and encouraging access to the River will bring beauty and enjoyment to our residents and visitors to our community.

The Great River Passage is a good step forward in taking advantage of this great resource. The Board of the Friends has reviewed the plan issued in December 2011, the revised plan issued in July 2012 and the Great River Passage Proposed Amendment to Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan, dated August 2012.

To be adopted, as part of the Comprehensive Plan the plan should reflect the broad vision, goals and objectives (as excerpted from the large document) that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan should not contain specific project and budgets, nor should it contain directions on organizing City departments to achieve specific implementation strategies.

We are very pleased with the GRP as it outlines its vision and objectives to fulfill that vision. The outlines of the More Natural, More Urban, and More Connected bring together the guiding principles of an urban – natural ecology of our riverfront.

However, the sections starting with The Four Reaches spell out specifics, which do not belong in the Comprehensive Plan. The legends for the maps identify specific activities that are proposed in each section of the River. While the maps are labeled concept plans we do not agree that they should be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

A very specific recommendation in The Valley Reach section is the recommendation that an Environment Education Center be built at Watergate Marina. There is reference to that in the text on page 54 which we recommend be removed. The picture on page 60 and map on page 61 along with the text on page 61 again describe a proposed Environmental Education Center. This park is in the floodplain of the Mississippi River.

While communities all along the Mississippi River and communities along the Red River are removing buildings from the floodplain because of flooding, St. Paul should not be building an education center in the floodplain. Crosby Lake – Hidden Falls Regional Park has been inundated a number of times with floodwater in the last ten years and as recently this past summer. While the Education Center might be raised above flood stage, no one will be able to access the building if the park is flooded.

Environmental Education Centers are wonderful resources for inner city kids and adults. However they should not be built in areas where there should be no building. If the marina building has to be rebuilt with the addition of a small café and space for rental equipment, it should not be built larger than the existing structure.

Overall, the Friends of the Parks are excited about the GRP and all it can bring to the Mississippi River and to the City of St. Paul. However, in planning for development near the River we must respect the hydrology of the River and help educate all of our residents and visitors to the River to the fact that the River cannot be contained. It is stronger than any of us.

We want to continue to work with the Park Department as the plan is further developed and implemented. We think the vision in the GRP will enhance our city.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
111 E. Kellogg Blvd., Ste. 105
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1256

September 18, 2012

Barbara Wencil, Chair
Saint Paul Planning Commission
1400 City Hall Annex
25 W 4th St
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Chairman Wencil:

I am writing to reaffirm support for Saint Paul's Great River Passage Master Plan, a wonderful vision for Saint Paul's Mississippi River. The National Park Service here at the Mississippi National River & Recreation Area is a proud partner with Saint Paul. The Great River Passage is a terrific example of a city embracing its most important natural and cultural feature. The National Park Service looks forward to many opportunities to partner with The City of Saint Paul in providing recreation and environmental education programs at a variety of places that are part of this long term vision.

Concepts involving sites like the Watergate Marina, Island Station, Pig's Eye and The Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, among others, illustrate the creative and innovative approaches that have emerged from the Great River Passage planning process. Congratulations to The City of Saint Paul in undergoing a complex public planning process to set the vision for our Mississippi River waterfront and an important piece of our National Park.

The National Park Service will continue our involvement in the next phases of planning and implementation. I look forward to the plans unfolding into on-the-ground success and having many new places for the community to engage the wonderful nature and culture of one of the world's great rivers. We are fortunate to have city leadership willing to invest the resources to insure that our nationally significant Mississippi River is protected and kept accessible to both residents and visitors of Saint Paul.

If you would like to discuss this more please feel free to contact me at 651-293-8454 or at paul_labovitz@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

Paul Labovitz
Superintendent

Dear Lucy,

I read, in the Highland Villager about specifics of the Great River Passage proposal. Having enjoyed the beauty of Crosby Park and Hidden Falls many times, I can't believe how ridiculous it is to propose destroying the environment to put in an environmental education center. That is

so utterly moronic, I can hardly believe the people working on this didn't see the obvious contradiction.

Please, if you are to be spending my tax dollars, put the center in an area that has already been environmentally destroyed, like the power plant near Randolph.

Sincerely,

Beth Brombach 2214 Goodrich Ave

Thompson, Lucy (CI-StPaul)

From: Butler, Sonja (CI-StPaul)
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2012 9:58 AM
To: Thompson, Lucy (CI-StPaul)
Subject: FW: Shepard/Otto Intersection and the GRP Master Plan

FYI,

From: Paige de Wees [mailto:paigedeweess@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 4:56 PM

To: pconnolly@visi.com; Dan.edgerton@stantec.com; ggelgelu@aeds-mn.org; Linde082@umn.edu; paulaplanning@gmail.com; rebeccanoecker@gmail.com; christopher.james.ochs@gmail.com; toliiver@kellyandlemmons.com; oliv0082@gmail.com; jperrus@larkinhoffman.com; porterbolen85@aol.com; ecr@trios-llc.com; tschertler@springsted.com; emilyshively@hotmail.com; bob@spauldingklay.com; tt hao@nexuscp.org; Jun-Li@springboardforthearts.org; thebethelgroup@yahoo.com; bwenci@msn.com; wickiser@comcast.net; Drummond, Donna (CI-StPaul); Butler, Sonja (CI-StPaul); Martinez, Jody (CI-StPaul); Klassen, Mike (CI-StPaul); Jeff McMenimen; Hunt, Anne (CI-StPaul); *CI-StPaul_ParksCustomerService; richlallier@stpaul.gov

Subject: Shepard/Otto Intersection and the GRP Master Plan

September 11, 2012

Dear Chris Ochs & Emily Shively, the St. Paul Planning Commission, Jody Martinez at Parks and Rec, Mike Klassen at Public Works, and leaders of St. Paul,

My name is Paige de Wees, I am a community member who has been involved in the Great River Passage master plan for years. I own a home in the West Seventh neighborhood of St. Paul on Butternut Avenue near the intersection of Shepard Road and Otto. My neighbors and I are thrilled with the GRP recommendation to lower the speed limit to 35 MPH on Shepard and re-design the road to become "parkway-like"!!!! Thanks to all of you who helped include this in the plan.

I will be out of town on business for the September 21 review of the GRP master plan, so I wanted to write and express the my neighborhood's strong concern that the parkway nature and 35 mph recommendation be held in the plan... (I'm writing in regard to the updated planning commission documents issue 4-c, see below)

My street, Butternut Avenue runs closely parallel to Shepard Road with a narrow median of only a few feet separating the two. Right now, although the speed limit is 45 mph in front of my house, 70 mph is not uncommon. *There are small children living on Butternut Avenue who are within feet of this 70 mph traffic speed.* I understand that traffic volumes must be balanced between West 7th and Shepard, but we must fashion Shepard Road to be something sensitive to the people and children in this neighborhood who are drawn across the road to the river. *First and foremost it is a safety issue.*

The topography at Shepard and Otto is spectacular. At the History Museum in St. Paul you will find that for over a hundred years citizens of St. Paul have seen it as their "sacred duty" to preserve this natural gem. I follow their lead. I urge that we re-design this portion of Shepard Road to better serve the people (and children) that live there. This means slowing it down, narrowing the road, making it easy to cross, and adding visual indicators that encourage drivers to slow down and enjoy the scenery. ***It would be a tragedy to wait for a child in this neighborhood to get hurt before we take action. So I recommend that this issue be given first priority in the short term plan.*** Teddy, Cecilia, Ainsley, Oliver, Miles and Verla of Butternut Avenue all thank you.

Sincerely,

Paige de Wees

651.214.4602

paigedeweess@gmail.com

www.deweessphotography.com

RE:

Issue 4-c: Comments were received regarding concern over the Plan's recommendation to lower the speed on Shepard Road to 35 MPH, along with the proposal that it be redesigned as a "parkway-like" road. Concern has been expressed that this will result in greater traffic moving to West Seventh Street.

• **Response:** The intent of the Plan is to transform the character of Shepard Road to enhance redevelopment potential along the river, and to more strongly connect adjacent neighborhoods to the river. A more detailed study of the corridor will be necessary to determine final design. Our traffic consultant has indicated that the reason West 7th has so much traffic, is because of the many destinations located along it. Shepard Road has few by comparison. The City's goal is to balance traffic volumes between parallel routes - lowering those on West 7th while increasing volumes on Shepard - and to do so while

keeping speeds compatible with surrounding land uses in both corridors. W. 7th is not capable of realizing a 25% increase in traffic volumes, regardless of speeds on Shepard Road. It can have more *person capacity* if transit use is revisited within the corridor, but room for increased auto capacity on W. 7th is limited.

- **Plan Change:** We have asked the consultant to add language to the section on Shepard Road to clarify that the intent of the changes to Shepard Road are to foster better

connectivity between the Great River Passage and adjacent neighborhoods rather than reduce Average Daily Traffic (ADT) and divert traffic. *For specific changes to the plan, refer to Attachment B: Line item(s) 161*

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1900 Landmark Towers
345 St. Peter Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota
55102-1661



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Fax: 651-223-5198
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September 20, 2012

Ms. Barbara Wencil, Chair
Saint Paul Planning Commission
1400 City Hall Annex
25 Fourth Street West
St. Paul, MN 55102

Ms. Lucy Thompson
Principal City Planner
1300 City Hall Annex
25 Fourth Street West
St. Paul, MN, 55102

RE: Saint Paul Port Authority Comments on the Draft Great River Passage Plan

Dear Chair Wencil and Ms. Thompson:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments, both through testimony and this letter regarding the planning process and contents of the Draft Great River Passage Plan. We very much appreciate it.

Planning Process

The Port Authority appreciates that we were involved in the planning process that generated the first draft of the Great River Passage Plan. We also appreciate the process that the Parks Commission and Parks Department went through to get feedback on the first draft, and then make conscientious changes to the Plan based on that feedback. The draft of the Plan before the Planning Commission is clearly a collaboration of many different interests and is a very good plan for the Mississippi River Area in Saint Paul.

The Working River

We are very pleased with the Working River's place in the Great River Passage Plan. The Port Authority appreciates that the Working River is recognized as a part of the "more urban" principle in the Plan. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the City Parks Department to balance the Working River with the environmental and recreational opportunities on the River. The Port Authority has seen an increase in the demand for river shipping in recent years. In 2011, 5.2 million tons of product was shipped through the Saint Paul Harbor, this is the largest amount in the last five years. We appreciate that the Plan emphasizes interpretation of the River Corridor's history, culture, and natural resources, and we look forward to including

interpretation of the Working River and industry as a part of that. There is some discussion in the Plan to provide landscape buffers in the industrial areas of Barge Terminal #1 and Red Rock. Although some landscaping buffer is probably appropriate, we also think there are opportunities for interpretation in these areas.

Both at Red Rock and Childs Road we appreciate that the Plan calls for a partnership with the Parks Department and the Port Authority to work with our tenants and the businesses in the area to find opportunities that provide safe public access (visual or physical) to the River. The River-Oriented Redevelopment Opportunities rendering shows three green connections at Barge Terminal #1. The Port Authority appreciates that the Plan identifies these connections as potential view corridors and later details that the Parks Department will work in cooperation with the Port Authority and industrial businesses to provide safe connection to the River (whether visual or physical.)

River-Oriented Redevelopment Opportunities

The Port Authority has some concerns over a couple of the areas designated as River-Oriented Redevelopment Opportunities in the Great River Passage Plan. River-Oriented Redevelopment Opportunities are defined on page 26 and depicted on page 27. Included in the area poised for River-Oriented Redevelopment are Crosby Lake Business Park and Riverview Industrial Park, two successful Port Authority business centers that are home to hundreds of jobs.

Crosby Lake Business Center

At Crosby Lake Business Center, Harris Mechanical (a LEED certified building with 150 jobs) and Summit Brewery (a favorite Saint Paul manufacturer with 54 jobs) are both in an area targeted for River-Oriented Redevelopment. Twin City Tile, located just east of Summit Brewery, seems to have mistakenly been depicted as part of Victoria Park. Crosby Lake Business Center was a brownfield redevelopment project completed in 1996. The three businesses that are identified in the Plan as a redevelopment opportunity or a park are part of a redevelopment that is only 16 years old.

Recommendation:

In addition to the Port Authority's investment in the brownfield redevelopment, these three businesses have invested \$16.5 million in private capital. They provide 240 jobs with an average wage of greater than \$20/hour plus benefits, and pay almost \$400,000 in property taxes. These three businesses are not located on the River and should not be included in the City's Comprehensive Plan as targeted areas for redevelopment.

Riverview Industrial Park

The Great River Passage Plan (last paragraph on page 79) discusses the intensification and diversification of land uses in the Riverview Industrial Park. As stated in an earlier paragraph in the Plan (also on page 79), the City plans to update the West Side Flats and Riverview Business District master plans in the near future. The Port Authority feels strongly that

comprehensive plan recommendations for land uses in that area should be reserved for the land use plan that will be initiated later this year. Community process will determine whether the land use plan for the West Side Flats area should move into the Riverview Industrial Park area as the Great River Passage Plan indicates. Good paying jobs are currently located in the Riverview Business District, and although there may be some redevelopment opportunities in the area, these opportunities should be considered in the City's West Side Flats and Riverview District master plans, not The Great River Passage Plan. The concept rendering shows redevelopment throughout Riverview.

Recommendation:

We think the language about the land use in Riverview Business District (the last paragraph on page 79) and the associated rendering of redevelopment in Riverview should be omitted from the Great River Passage Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We look forward to working with the Parks Department in the future on balancing the needs of the Working River with recreational and environmental opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louis F. Jambois", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Louis F. Jambois
President

cc: Michael Hahm, Director, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION

FILE NUMBER 12-GRPP Recommendation

DATE September 20, 2012

WHEREAS, Section 73.04 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code states that the Heritage Preservation Commission shall "serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters... [and] shall review and comment on studies which relate to the...architectural heritage of the city..."; and

WHEREAS, the Great River Passage (GRP) Master Plan was developed through a comprehensive community process and prepared by a multi-disciplinary consultant team, an inter-departmental City staff team and a 56-member task force/technical advisory group; and

WHEREAS, the Heritage Preservation Commission has been asked for its review and comment on the Master Plan in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 73.04; and

WHEREAS, the large study area includes multiple historic resources that have been designated by the Saint Paul City Council for heritage preservation; and

WHEREAS, the study area also includes several historic resources listed on the National and/or State Registers; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan addresses the fact that a comprehensive cultural resources survey has not been conducted specifically for this project (The last City-wide cultural resources survey was conducted in 1983 and warrants updating) and states that "Many resources have been lost or compromised over time because their value as part of the historical record has been unappreciated or ignored;" and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan contains goals, objectives, strategies and projects based on three core principles which are *More Natural, More Urban and More Connected* and the application of these principles are explored in four sub-areas, or reaches as the Mississippi River travels through Saint Paul. They are the Gorge, Valley, Downtown and Floodplain; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan lists ten recommendations of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan that relate to the river corridor. One recommendation related to historic resources recommends to "Encourage the protection and restoration of river corridor cultural resources, including historic structures, culturally significant landscapes, and archaeological and ethnographic resources;" and

WHEREAS, the objectives of the Great River Passage Master Plan that address historic preservation include the following:

1. Develop a comprehensive interpretive plan and specific strategies for implementation,
2. Complete an inventory of cultural and historic resources within the corridor prior to implementing elements of the Master Plan,
3. Promote interpretation of the corridor's history, culture, and unique resources; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations herein relate to the entire Great River Passage Master Plan given the whole document will be adopted by the City Council as well as certain sections of the Master Plan as an amendment to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations by the

HPC that are incorporated into the entire Plan should also be considered for portions being adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission makes the following recommendations for changes and/or additions to the Great River Passage Master Plan for further consideration by the Saint Paul Planning Commission and City Council:

1. The first of the four Strategies proposed in Appendix A.2 is, "Protect and Interpret Historic, Cultural and Natural Resources." The HPC believes this is appropriate. However, both this Appendix and Chapter 5.4 *History and Culture* stress interpretation almost to the exclusion of protection. Ideally, a paragraph establishing identification, evaluation, designation, preservation and protection of historic resources as a strategy of the Plan on the same level as those addressing interpretation should be added including a new Objective under *History and Culture*.
2. Although the "Overview" (page 80) claims that "the plan provides an overview of federal and state laws that govern the treatment of historic, archaeological, and cultural resources in the Park, and some direction on procedures for historic preservation," this overview and direction do not seem to materialize in the Plan. Further, according to the last paragraph of the *Overview*, "Four strategies for implementation are proposed at the conclusion of this section" We do not find them there. If these are the four strategies in Appendix A.2, they should be referenced accordingly.
3. Consider the following edits under *Protect and Interpret Historic, Cultural and Natural Resources*: "The preservation chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan calls for historic context studies of Saint Paul Parks, Parkways, and Cultural Landscapes, and of the Mississippi Valley in terms of Navigation and Commerce. Completion of such studies would greatly contribute towards ongoing preservation efforts within the Park, enabling identification, evaluation, and designation of significant resources. Resources already listed on the National Register of Historic Places should be locally designated as well."
4. The map on page A50 is unintelligible, needs updating and does not use the color-coding established in the Comprehensive Plan for historic resources. Sites that have been designated should be distinguished from those that have been inventoried but not designated, perhaps separating them into two maps given the large size of the study area and the large number of historic resources. The Plan should make clear what designated properties are currently established and what has been inventoried, establishing a baseline for the recommended survey work.
5. The Plan should recognize there are strategies in the newly adopted Greater Lowertown Master Plan that relate to historic preservation and are within the boundaries of the GRP Master Plan.
6. Consider adding language for Parks and Recreation to develop a policy for working with the HPC and other partners and implementing recommendations from the City's historic preservation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan under *Develop Partnerships*

to Protect and Interpret Unique Resources within the Corridor (page A51).

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission generally finds the objectives in the Great River Passage Master Plan to be a pro-preservation statement that supports the Historic Preservation Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission finds, with the above recommendations, the Great River Passage Plan to be consistent with the City's policy to protect and promote the heritage of the City of Saint Paul and to preserve our architecturally and culturally diverse historic resources.

MOVED BY	Trimble
SECONDED BY	Dana

IN FAVOR	7
AGAINST	0
ABSTAIN	